(d) and (e) Yes, Sir. An Expert Committee of UGC has prepared a Model Detailed Project Report for setting up of new degree colleges with Cenral-State partnership, in identified educationally backward districts with Gross Enrollment Ratio lower than the national average.

Law on right to education

3573. SHRIMATI KANIMOZHI:
SHRIMATI SUPRIYA SULE:

Will the Minister of HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government is likely to bring forth a law in the near future, guaranteeing the right to education;

(b) if so, whether provision of free and compulsory education for the relevant age group of 6 to 14 years has been mandated in our Constitution as a fundamental right;

(c) whether, even though there are limits to public funding, and there may be temptations to opt for market determined policies on ground of efficiency, education can be left to the market forces only at our peril; and

(d) by when a final decision in this regard is likely to be taken?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT (SHRI MD. ALI ASHRAF FATMI): (a) to (d) Article 21A of the Constitution makes education a Fundamental Right for children in the age group of 6—14 years by providing that *"the State shall provide free and compulsory education to all children of the age of six to fourteen years in such manner as the State may, by law, determine"*. As per the extant policy, commercialization of elementary education is not permissible and private not-for-profit initiatives are not barred. As the enhanced outlays in education for the XIth Plan would indicate, the public sector investments would continue to play a substantial role. The Government is committed to facilitate the enactment of an appropriate legislation that would enable the realization of making education a fundamental right as required by the Constitution.

FDI in education

3574. SHRIMATI SUPRIYA SULE:
DR. T. SUBBARAMI REDDY:

Will the Minister of HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government is seriously considering FDI in education;

(b) if so, whether problems are a lot more in non-higher education that in higher education, and we need to look at Government institutions other than IITs;

(c) whether there is a steady deterioration in the quality of these colleges which needs to be focused to bring back quality of these colleges; and

(d) if so, what are the features Government proposes to consider to have FDI in education?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT (SHRIMATI D. PURANDESWARI): (a) to (d) Foreign Direct Investment is already allowed

up to 100%, on the automatic route in the Education Sector, subject to the sectoral rules/ regulations as may be applicable. The Government is not aware of any problem in this regard. Focused attention is being given for promoting quality and excellence in higher education through steps including provision of improved infrastructure, qualitative improvement in faculty, increase in number of doctoral fellowships, emphasis on research, schemes of Universities with potential for excellence and colleges with potential for excellence, periodical revision of curriculum, academic reforms, etc. Several fold increase in Public investment on all sectors of education has been envisaged in the XI Five Year Plan for enhancing capacity and improvement of qualtiy of education. The All India Council for Technical Education (AICTE) has regulations in place for entry and operation of foreign universities/institutions imparting technical education in India.

Increasing access to higher educations

3575. SHRIMATI SHOBHANA BHARTIA:
SHRI VIJAY J. DARDA:

Will the Minister of HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state:

(a) whether any assessment has been made by Government to ascertain the percentage of youth who have access to higher education;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether, to increase access to higher education amongst youths, Government has taken any steps or formulated any strategy to achieve the target; and

(d) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT (SHRIMATI D. PURANDESWARI): (a) and (b) According to the provisional statistics available for 2005-06 the Gross Enrolment Ratio in the relevant age group (18-24 years) for Higher Education is 11.61.

(c) and (d) Budgetary allocations for higher and technical education has been substantially increased since 2004-05 to expand existing capacity as well as to establish new higher educational institutions. The Central Government has established a number of Central Universities, Indian Institutes of Management, Indian Institutes of Technology, Indian Institutes of Information Technology, National Institutes of Technology and Indian Institutes of Science Education & Research. In the XI Plan the National Development Council has approved:

(i) establisnment of 16 central universities in uncovered states and 14 world class universities;

(ii) 370 new degree colleges in districts having Gross Enrolment Ratio in higher education lower than the national average by incentivising State Governments to establish such colleges;

(iii) construction of girls hostels;

(iv) one time assistance to enable 150 State Universities and 6000 colleges uncovered by the UGC to attain level of eligibility for UGC assistance; and